

Standard USHC-4: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the causes and the course of the Civil War and Reconstruction in America.

USHC-4.1 Compare the social and cultural characteristics of the North, the South, and the West during the antebellum period, including the lives of African Americans and social reform movements such as abolition and women's rights. (H, P, G)

Taxonomy Level: 2B – Understand/Conceptual Knowledge

Previous/future knowledge

In 4th grade, students compared the industrial North and the agricultural South prior to the Civil War (4-6.1). They also summarized the roles and accomplishments of the leaders of the abolitionist movement and the Underground Railroad before and during the Civil War (4-6.2).

In the 8th grade, students explained the importance of agriculture during antebellum South Carolina, including plantation life, slavery, and the impact of the cotton gin (8-3.1). Students were also asked to draw conclusions about how sectionalism arose from events or circumstances of racial tension, internal population shifts, and political conflicts, especially dealing with the conflicts faced by African-Americans (8-3.3).

It is essential for the students to know:

In order for students to understand why the North and the South fought in the Civil War, they must understand how and why these regions grew increasingly different in the antebellum period. **Social and cultural differences** emerged first during the colonial period based largely on the cultures of the people who settled there. These differences were increased by the economic specialties that resulted from differences in geography of the regions. Finally increased regional pride led to self interested sectionalism. The development of the West exacerbated the tensions between the North and the South leading eventually to secession and war.

The **North** was affected by the culture of the Puritans who settled New England, the Quakers of Pennsylvania and by the diversity of the populations of commercial centers such as New York City. In New England, towns and cities arose around the Congregational church and as commercial centers. Education was established early by the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay to enable the faithful to read the Bible. Immigrants were attracted to the jobs in growing industries (USHC 3.3) and contributed to the cultural diversity and growing population of the region. There were relatively few slaves in the North and so they did not significantly impact the culture of the region. Northerners supported political issues that promoted their regional interests such as high tariffs and a national bank (USHC 3.3).

The culture of the **South** was strongly influenced by its colonial beginnings and its economy. Large plantations produced a privileged class that dominated the government, society and culture. However, contrary to popular myth, the majority of Southerners in the antebellum period lived on family farms and did not own slaves. The South developed fewer large towns and cities because navigable rivers brought ships close to the fields. The wealthy educated their children privately, did not provide public education for poor whites and outlawed teaching slaves to read or write. The region did not attract as many immigrants because there were few jobs in industry. Because of the large slave population and significant numbers of free blacks, African Americans contributed substantially to culture and society in the South. Southerners supported political issues that promoted their regional interests such as low tariffs, and the spread of slavery to the territories (USHC 3.3).

The **West** developed as settlers moved into the region and carried their cultural values with them. Settlers in the old Northwest reflected the values of New England while the southern states influenced the culture of states such as Kentucky, Alabama, Mississippi, and Texas. Manifest Destiny strengthened the strong individualism that naturally arose among those settling the West. Westerners supported political issues that promoted their interests such as cheap land, internal improvements and uncontrolled banking (USHC 3.3).

African Americans lived in all regions of the country. Although the Northern states had begun to emancipate their slaves right after the Declaration of Independence, some northern states continued to have slaves into the 1830s. Slavery was prohibited in the old Northwest by the Northwest Ordinance. Although free blacks lived in the North, they could not exercise the same rights as whites. In the North, African Americans were purposefully disenfranchised by law at the same time that universal manhood suffrage was established. They were often the last hired and the first fired and did the jobs that were least attractive. De facto segregation was practiced throughout the North. Most African Americans living in the South were slaves. The conditions of their lives depended in large part on where they lived and the benevolence of their masters. Those freedmen who lived in the South lived mostly in the cities where they could find work as artisans. Although their job opportunities were better than blacks in the North because many of them had skills that were in high demand, they too were not granted civil or political rights.

The religious revival movement [the Great Awakening] of the early 1800s was national in scope and contributed to the development of **reform movements** that further divided the nation. The **abolitionist movement** first developed among Quakers who believed that everyone, even slaves, had an inner light. Abolitionists included African-Americans such as Nat Turner, Frederick Douglass, and Harriet Tubman and whites such as William Lloyd Garrison, the Grimke sisters, Harriet Beecher Stowe and John Brown who engaged in a variety of protest activities. They published newspapers and organized anti-slavery conventions, wrote books and helped slaves escape on the Underground Railroad. And they led rebellions. Such activities led to a strengthening of the resolve of slave owners to justify their culture and further divided the nation. Southerners argued that slavery was a 'positive good' because slaves were better off than industrial workers in the North. It is important to note that most northerners were not abolitionists and that even some abolitionists did not believe that freed slaves should have equal rights. The abolitionist movement split over the issue of whether or not to engage in the political process and whether or not to recognize the rights of women to speak in public against slavery. Abolition was not effective until the controversy over western expansion led to political confrontation.

The women's rights movement was active in the North and tied to the abolitionist movement. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, organizers of the Seneca Falls (New York) Convention in 1848 which called for **women's rights**, met and determined to advocate for women's rights when they were denied the right to participate at an abolitionist convention. However there were many other issues that caused women to protest their second class citizenship including their limited access to education and the rights to own and control property and to obtain a divorce.

It is not essential for the students to know:

The specific ideals of the American Renaissance, transcendentalists or the Utopian movements and reforms in education, prisons and mental hospitals and the temperance movement are not essential. Although it is helpful, it is not essential that students know that it was the Irish and Germans who immigrated to the northern parts of the United States beginning in the 1840s. They do not need to remember the names of particular newspapers or books that were published as part of the abolitionist movement. They do not need to remember other important women of the period such as Elizabeth Blackwell or other abolitionists such as Elijah Lovejoy and Theodore Dwight Weld.

Assessment guidelines:

Appropriate assessments will require students to **compare** the social and cultural characteristics of the North, the South, and the West during the antebellum period. They should be able to **summarize** the impact of slavery on the lives of African Americans and **compare** the lives of African Americans living in the North and in the South, both free and slave. They should be able to **explain** the relationship between abolitionism and women's rights and the extent to which these movements were successful in the antebellum period. They should be able to **interpret** maps, graphs, charts and political cartoons to infer their relationship to information about the time period.